



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

APR 10 1996

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DOCKET # 95-100 ORIGINAL

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Mr. Richard N. Gladstein
Producer, FilmColony, Ltd.
7920 Sunset Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90046

Dear Mr. Gladstein:

On behalf of Chairman Hundt, I would like to thank you for your recent letter regarding the presentation to the Commission of a recommendation for an Advanced Television standard.

On November 28, 1995 we received a report from the Commission's Advisory Committee on Advanced Television Services (ACATS) making its recommendation. This matter is currently still under consideration by the Commission, and no final decisions have been made. The FCC will be considering a total of at least three Notices on this issue which, when taken together, will provide a complete and current record on all aspects relating to the creation of our nation's digital broadcast service. The first of this trilogy was released August 9, 1995, in anticipation of the final report and recommendation made by ACATS. Comments were received in late November, and replies were due January 22, 1996.

We expect to release two more Notices this year. One will address the specific standard for transmission of digital television, which is the focus of your concerns. The other will take up the methodology of assigning channels for digital service to eligible parties. Through the process of notice, comment and reply, the Commission is able to consider a wide variety of proposals.

Many computer enthusiasts are concerned, and rightfully so, about the impact the standard's adoption would have on scanning formats. One such format is progressive scanning, typically used on computer monitors, which is preferable for still images or high resolution graphics. The other is interlace, typically used in analog television sets, which many feel is more appropriate for preserving consumer's access to the vast body of work already created for television. Similarly, many in the cinematic community, such as yourself, have expressed concerns regarding the appearance of their work on the small screen of television, whether it be today's 4:3 aspect ratio or the proposed wide screen 16:9 dimensions. Please take note that all permutations of scanning modes and aspect ratios are supported by the standard recommended by the ACATS, and would not prevent the development, use and eventual proliferation of progressive displays. In fact, of the 18 proposed format permutations in the ACATS recommendation, 14 are for progressive displays.

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As to the presentation of existing 4:3 video programming on a 16:9 display, for those who choose such a system, the receivers will adjust the picture to fill the screen in a manner most pleasing to the consumer. This may mean black bars on the edges of the screen, automatic cropping of the top and bottom or even the use of "pan and scan" to fill the screen according to the cinematographer's artistic vision and the broadcaster's decisions on how to present the material. And for the consumers who choose to purchase less costly 4:3 receivers, or use set-top convertors with their existing sets, similar options will be available to best fill the screens to their preference.

As you are well aware, the issues raised in this proceeding are many and complex, and I regret I am unable to do them all justice in a short letter. In addition to those at Apple and the ASC with whom you agree on this issue. I would encourage you to get more information from Mr. Stan Baron, President of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers at 914-761-1100 or 212-664-7557. Stan has been integrally involved in these matters for many years and will be able to present a well balanced perspective on all issues of concern to you. If you would care to discuss this further with me, please feel free to call my office at 202-418-2600.

Rest assured that this proceeding, far from being over, has in many respects just begun. The Commission welcomes and encourages you to actively participate in this process and to share your concerns so that we may make the best decision in the interest of all Americans.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Saul T. Shapiro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Saul" being more prominent and the last name "Shapiro" written in a more compact, flowing style.

Saul T. Shapiro
Assistant Bureau Chief
for Technology Policy



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FAX COVER SHEET

TO: *Reed Hundt* FAX #:

FROM: *Richard Gladstein*

DATE: *4/9*

RE:

Pages:

If you do not receive all pages, please call Dan Armstrong at 213-845-4253.



April 9, 1996

Reed Hundt
FCC Chairman
1919 M. Street, N.W.
Washington D.C., 20554

VIA FAX: 202.418.2801

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Dear Mr. Hundt:

It has recently come to my attention that the Federal Communications Commission is considering recommendations by ACATS, the television manufacturers alliance.

I feel very strongly that these recommendations, if adopted, would be highly detrimental to the work of cinematographers and all artists in the film industry. The ACATS assessment fails to take into account the necessity of maintaining high image quality. The "interlaced" display system produces poor resolution, especially when combined with camera movement and titles.

Please do not be swayed by arguments in favor of short term profits. It is essential that the work of our industry be preserved in the manner closest to the way it was originally intended. The ACATS proposal allows the broadcaster to crop cinematographers work at will. Compositions are painstakingly created for dramatic purposes and should not be allowed to be tampered with except by their authors. What clearly is needed is a widescreen television format which would be able to accommodate normal (1.85 to 1) and "scope" (2.35 to 1) films.

Please do not be swayed by a handful of giant electronics companies whose self-interest will dilute the effect of the images that arise from the work of cinematographers - the chief originators of the images we all watch.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard N. Gladstein".

Richard N. Gladstein
Producer
FilmColony, Ltd.